

The resurrection and
the origin of the
Church in Jerusalem

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THE RESURRECTION AND THE ORIGIN OF THE CHURCH IN JERUSALEM.¹

There are various ways of approaching the study of early Christianity. One way is to begin with Paul. The writings that have come down to us in the New Testament under his name, so far as they are genuine, are primary sources for the history of the apostolic age. Pfeiderer, for example, begins his *Urchristentum* with the words: "One can only regret that we know so little that is certain about the first beginnings of the Christian Church, but the fact itself can not well be contested. Only from the time of the emergence of the Apostle Paul, in whose Epistles authentic information is preserved, does the historical darkness become in a measure illuminated; concerning the first beginnings of the Church, however, Paul gives but scanty hints (1 Cor. 15: 3ff.), from which a distinct conception of the process can not be obtained. This lack, moreover, is not fully supplied by the Gospels and Acts which were written later."² A more common way, however, even among those who share Pfei-

¹ An address delivered in substance at the opening of the ninety-fifth session of Princeton Theological Seminary on Friday, September 21, 1906.

² *Urchristentum*³ I, p. 1. Man mag es bedauern, dass wir über die ersten Anfänge der christlichen Kirche so wenig Sicheres wissen, aber die Tatsache selbst ist nicht wohl zu bestreiten. Erst vom Auftreten des Apostels Paulus an, in dessen Briefen authentische Nachrichten

derer's opinion of the secondary character of Acts as a source for the history of the apostolic age is to begin with Jewish Christianity or the Church in Jerusalem. Only recently von Dobschütz has placed the discussion of Jewish Christianity and the origin of the Church in Jerusalem in the forefront of the problems which still seek solution at the hands of the historians of the apostolic age.³

That any attempt to write the history of the apostolic age without taking account of the life and work of Jesus must prove inadequate will not be denied. For whether we learn of this from Paul or from other sources, it is the fact of the life and work, death and resurrection of Jesus which is the *præ* of the subsequent history. The resurrection, it is true, is often eliminated from the statement of the factual basis upon which the early Church rested and of which account must be taken by historians of the apostolic age, and in its place is put the belief of the disciples in the resurrection. But whatever view be taken of the resurrection of Jesus as narrated in the New Testament, it will be admitted that the history of the apostolic age can not be understood apart from the person of Jesus: what He was, what He did, what He taught, what impression He made on his disciples and what they believed concerning Him.

The relation which Jesus sustained to the early Church can not be limited to mere temporal succession. It might be explained as causal without conscious intention or as teleological. If the Church was not merely the result of the Messianic work of Jesus, but the particular result intended and prepared for by Jesus, is the efficient cause of its origin to be sought in an activity of Jesus or was the founding of the Church accomplished by others without any direct par-

vorliegen, lichtet sich das geschichtliche Dunkel einigermaßen, aber über die erste Entstehung der Kirche gibt Paulus nur einige ganz dürftige Andeutungen (I Kor. 15, 3ff.), aus welchen sich ein deutliches Bild des Hergangs nicht gewinnen lässt. Diese Lücke wird auch durch die später geschriebenen Evangelien und die Apostelgeschichte nicht völlig ausgefüllt.

³ *Probleme des apostolischen Zeitalters*, 1904.

tipication of Jesus? At this point two essentially different views of the origin of the Church divide. The issue concerns the nature of Jesus and of his Messianic work. If Jesus' activity ceased forever with his death and his Messianic work was finally terminated by that event, Jesus Himself can have taken no active part in the origin of the Church. This seems to be implicated in Weizsäcker's view, though he seeks to escape it by casting around the beginning of the Church's life a shroud of mystery, called the immediate in its creative power.⁴ Wernle also allows for Christian faith, which affirms the reality of the spiritual world, the shadowy possibility of an activity of Jesus in producing through the form of visions the faith of the disciples in the resurrection,—a faith which issued in the founding of the Church. But as an historian he confesses that he is compelled to seek the guarantee of the reality of the appearances of Jesus after his death in their effect, and this he traces to the impression which Jesus made on his disciples during his earthly ministry.⁵

There is another view of Jesus' person and work which implicates a different view of the origin of the Church. The

⁴ Weizsäcker, *Das apostolische Zeitalter*², p. 5. "Auch unter dieser Auffassung bleibt etwas, was nicht weiter zu erklären ist, wie bei allen höheren Anfängen im Gebiete des religiösen Lebens, das Unmittelbare in seiner schöpferischen Gewalt, und die letzte Ursache desselben liegt jenseits geschichtlicher Forschung."

⁵ Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*², p. 82. Das Urteil über diese Erscheinungen hängt ab vom Zutrauen zu Paulus und seinem Berichterstatter, mehr noch vom philosophischen und religiösen Standort, vom "Glauben" des Beurteilers. Rein wissenschaftliche Erwägungen können da nicht entscheiden, wo es sich um das Ja oder Nein der unsichtbaren Welt und die Möglichkeit des Verkehrs mit Geistern handelt. Daher sind alle Erklärungsversuche, deren Grundlage das Axiom bildet, dass unsere sinnenfällige Welt die einzige Realität ist, notwendig und überzeugend nur für den Erklärer selbst. Der christliche Glaube rechnet immer mit der Realität des Jenseits, das unser Ziel ist; es macht daher für den Christen gar keine Schwierigkeit, das wirkliche, durch eine Vision vermittelte Hineinragen Jesu in unsere Welt für den Grund des Auferstehungsglaubens anzunehmen.

Aus einem anderen Grund kann sich der Historiker mit dieser Annahme, selbst wenn er sie billigt, nicht begnügen. Der blosse Glaube

New Testament does not limit Jesus' activity to his earthly life. The Gospels represent Jesus as acting directly on men after his death and resurrection and as promising an activity mediated by the Spirit. This is the view also of Paul and Acts. The Gospels, moreover, in reporting the words of Jesus make it plain that He expected to exercise his Messianic functions after his death and to come again on the clouds of heaven in royal Messianic dignity. This expectation forms an essential element of Jesus' Messianic consciousness. It can not have had its origin in the appearances and the faith which they produced, since the two differ in form. The witness of the New Testament to an activity of Jesus subsequent to his death is thus twofold; on the one hand prophetic in form and constituting an element in Jesus' Messianic consciousness, and on the other hand experiential in form and consisting of direct testimony.

The New Testament view of Jesus' Messianic activity presupposes and includes the actual resurrection of Jesus as the opposing view denies and excludes it. The two views agree that the disciples believed in the resurrection. They differ in regard to the origin of this belief. The point at issue between them concerns the relation which Jesus sustained to this belief. The interpretation of this relation may in either view implicate an activity of Jesus after his death. The issue between them will thus turn ultimately on the question of an activity of Jesus after his resurrection or on the resurrection itself. The witness of the New Testament to the resurrection and to an activity of Jesus after his resurrection is both prophetic and experiential in form. The genuineness of the prophetic witness of Jesus to

an dieses Wunder macht die Entstehung des Christentums von einem Zufall abhängig, als wäre ohne diese Geschichte die Sache Jesu untergegangen. Aber in der Person Jesu war eine so gewaltige, siegesmächtige Erlöserkraft, die durch den schmachvollen Tod doch auf keine Weise zu vernichten war. "Er war zu gross, um sterben zu können" (Lagarde), d. h. der Eindruck, den er gemacht, die Gemeinschaft, in der man mit ihm gelebt hatte, waren zu gross, zu fest und unzerstörbar."

his resurrection is not, however, so generally admitted. Weizsäcker regards Jesus' predictions of his resurrection as unhistorical, but lays great stress on the prophecy of his coming in glory.⁶ The principal argument against the historicity of these predictions is the psychological difficulty of the unbelief of the disciples when the resurrection was reported to them. But Jesus' predictions of his resurrection are closely associated in the Gospels with the announcement of his approaching suffering and death (Mk. 8: 31; 9: 9, 12f, 31; 10: 33f; 14: 27 and ||s.). The disciples did not comprehend Jesus' meaning; the thought of his suffering was too hard for them. Moreover, it was in connection with the announcement of his passion and resurrection that Jesus explicitly predicted his coming in glory (Mk. 8: 31ff). This thought certainly took strong hold of the disciples' minds. On the way up to Jerusalem they disputed about the places of honor in the Messiah's kingdom. The transfiguration, the triumphal entry, the cleansing of the temple, the eschatological discourse, must all have contributed to produce a state of mind such as the disciples manifested. When, therefore, death came instead of the expected glory, it brought confusion. The prophecy of his coming in glory thus confirms the predictions of the resurrection. But if Jesus predicted his resurrection, joining it as He did with the designation of Himself as Messiah and with the prediction of his suffering, the thought of the resurrection must be admitted to a place in his Messianic consciousness along with the thought of his suffering. And if so, then it was conceived by Him as part of his Messianic work. From this it may be inferred that Jesus in predicting his resurrection thought of his Messianic activity as extending beyond his passion. The view therefore which would limit Jesus' activity by his death contradicts an essential element of his Messianic consciousness manifested in the double form of the prophecy of his return in glory and the prediction of his resurrection.

⁶ Weizsäcker, *Das apostolische Zeitalter*², p. 14.

But if it be admitted that Jesus expected his Messianic work to extend beyond his death, that he expected to rise from the dead and come in glory, the question of the realization of this expectation in either form becomes a subject of testimony. It is important to bear in mind that the tradition which contains Jesus' prediction of his resurrection contains also a definite statement of time,—“on the third day” or “after three days” (Mt. 16: 21; Mk. 8: 31, etc),—an element so firmly fixed in the early tradition that it appears in Paul (1 Cor. 15: 4). What, then, is the nature of the testimony which goes to accredit the realization by Jesus of his expected resurrection on the third day after his death? The early tradition about the life of Jesus embodied in the Synoptic Gospels bears witness to the resurrection both by its account of the empty grave and by its description of the appearances of Jesus (Mt. 28: 1ff.; Mk. 16: 1ff.; Lk. 24: 1ff.). Paul witnesses to the resurrection on the third day,—derived probably from the tradition current in Jerusalem (*ὁ καὶ παρέλαβον*)—and adds his testimony to the fact of the resurrection based on an appearance of Jesus to him (1 Cor. 15: 3ff.). The testimony of Acts and of John both to the fact and the time of the resurrection agrees with that of the earlier evidence (Acts 10: 40; Jn. 20: 1ff.). Indeed, the witness of the New Testament to the resurrection is so pervasive that the fact of its witness can not be denied. Those who do not accept this witness usually seek to weaken its force either by pointing out its lack of consistency or by limiting its witness to the belief of the disciples.

The principal reasons urged in support of the view that the witness of the New Testament to the resurrection is not consistent arise out of the nature of the documentary evidence. No one of the Gospels contains a complete account of all that happened in connection with this event. Moreover, Paul's list of the appearances is not exhaustive. There are in the nature of the case, here as elsewhere in the Gospels, differences of detail which are the proper subject

of harmonistic study. One of the chief differences is the double tradition given by the Gospels in regard to the place of the appearances of Jesus. The Matthew-Mark tradition is said to report appearances only in Galilee; Luke mentions appearances only in Jerusalem, while John (including the twenty-first chapter) narrates appearances both in Jerusalem and in Galilee. Apart from the twenty-first chapter, which is often treated separately as constituting an appendix, the Fourth Gospel agrees with the Gospel of Luke in recording appearances only in Jerusalem.

The arguments in defense of the thesis that the Gospels do not present a consistent account of the place of the appearances of Jesus have been stated by Schmiedel in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, IV, art. "Resurrection- and Ascension-Narratives," c. 4039-4087. The starting point of the argument is the supposed divergence of two forms of Gospel tradition. The earlier form, preserved in Matthew-Mark, narrates appearances of Jesus only in Galilee: the later form given in Luke-John localizes the appearances in Jerusalem.

Without entering upon the question of the relative priority of the different forms of Gospel tradition, it will be sufficient (and of primary importance for the real issue) to determine in as objective a manner as possible, that is, on the basis of the documentary evidence which contains this tradition, both what the Gospel tradition in regard to the localization of the appearances is and what relation the different elements of it sustain to one another.

The Gospel of Mark in its earliest transmitted form does not narrate an appearance of Jesus. The message of the angel in 16:7; cf. 14:28, may justify the inference that, had the author completed his Gospel, or in case he did and the original ending has been lost, the Gospel would have contained an account of an appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Galilee. It could not, however, be fairly inferred that the original ending would not have contained an account of an appearance in Jerusalem. Matthew's narrative,

which is here closely parallel with Mark, records both the reference to Galilee (Mt. 26: 32; 28: 7; cf. Mk. 14: 28; 16: 7) and an appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem as well as an appearance in Galilee (Mt. 28: 9, 16ff.). It may, however, be fairly inferred from the Gospel of Mark that the disciples were in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection (Mk. 16: 7).

The Gospel of Matthew records Jesus' promise to go before the disciples into Galilee (26: 32); the message of the angel to the women, "Behold He goeth before you into Galilee" (28: 7); an appearance of Jesus to the women in Jerusalem (28: 9); his message to the disciples bidding them repair to Galilee (28: 10); and finally an appearance of Jesus to the eleven disciples in Galilee (28: 16ff.). From Matthew's narrative, as from Mark's, it may be inferred that the disciples were in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection.

What support do these facts, together with reasonable inferences from them, give to the theory that the earliest form of Gospel tradition embodied in Matthew-Mark locates the appearances of Jesus in Galilee? Mark does not narrate an appearance of Jesus; Matthews narrates two appearances,—one in Jerusalem and one in Galilee. Matthew, it is true, does not record an appearance to the disciples in Jerusalem, but this silence can not be construed as excluding such an appearance without doing injustice to the nature of the Gospel, which even in this chapter gives indication of a fuller tradition than that which it contains (28: 16).

But the record by Matthew, one of the chief witnesses for the localization of the appearances in Galilee, of an appearance in Jerusalem although only to the women (28: 9f.), furnishes a difficulty for the theory now under consideration. What are the grounds upon which its authenticity is questioned? For the discussion of this point Schmiedel refers to his article on the "Gospels" in the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, II, c. 1878, sec. 138. Attention is first called to the fact that "the appearance in Jerusalem

to the two women (Mt. 28: 9f.) is almost universally given up," and then follow the reasons for this view, in which Schmiedel concurs. The first reason advanced is "the silence of all the other accounts." But there are only two canonical Gospels, Matthew and Mark, and an extra-canonical Gospel, that of Peter, which contain the supposedly earlier form of the Gospel tradition regarding the appearances, and of these Mark and the Gospel of Peter do not narrate an appearance of Jesus. If the silence of all the other accounts be understood of Luke-John, the primary witnesses for the tradition which locates the appearances in Jerusalem, then the argument is simply an appeal to a tradition which is *ex hypothesi* later in origin and secondary in character for the purpose of discrediting an element in one of the witnesses to a tradition which is held to be earlier in time and generally more trustworthy on the subject of the localization of the appearances, except for this one element. In order to estimate the argument from silence in this case, let it be supposed that the Luke-John tradition had mentioned this appearance. What effect would this have had on the judgment concerning the historicity of Matthew's record? The passage in Matthew would still have been open to the suspicion of influence from the supposedly secondary tradition. But there is another reason for giving up the appearance of Mt. 28: 9f. "In it Jesus only repeats the direction which the women had already received through the angel." The form of the words is, however, not the same in the two instances, and the similarity of content would only furnish an indication of common origin were it proven that the appearance in question did not occur.

But, it is argued, "If the disciples had seen Jesus in Jerusalem, as Luke states, it would be absolutely incomprehensible how Mark and Matthew came to require them to repair to Galilee before they could receive a manifestation of Jesus." But neither Matthew nor Mark makes this requirement. They record the message of the angel and of Jesus bidding the disciples go to Galilee and promising that they

would see Jesus there. The reason for the record in Matthew-Mark of the message to the disciples to repair to Galilee is probably to be connected with Jesus' purpose expressed before his death in the remark to the disciples that after his resurrection He would go before them into Galilee. The reference to Galilee in the Matthew-Mark tradition should be explained as due not to ignorance and exclusion of Jesus' appearances in Jerusalem, but to the fact that Galilee was the place indicated by Jesus before his death for meeting with his disciples and that there this tradition knew of a singularly significant appearance of Jesus.

The view that is held concerning the origin of the double tradition contained in the Gospels about the place of the appearances will affect the judgment of value placed upon the different elements which enter into this tradition. It is argued that if we can not understand how the Matthew-Mark tradition arose on the hypothesis of the priority of the Luke-John tradition, the converse is quite easy to understand. Schmiedel suggests the following account of the origin of the Luke-John tradition (*Ency. Bib.*, IV. c. 4072). Even before Luke and John wrote "there had sprung up, irrespective of Mark and Matthew, the feeling that Jesus must in any case have already appeared to the disciples in Jerusalem; it presented itself to Luke and John with a certain degree of authority, and these writers had not now any occasion to invent, but simply to choose what seemed to them the more probable representation, and then, when in the preparation of their respective books they reached the order to go to Galilee, merely to pass over it or get around it as no longer compatible with the new view." But how did the Matthew-Mark tradition originate? The tradition which locates the appearances in Galilee is not the more natural or reasonable supposing that Matthew and Mark were dependent on conjecture. "Thus the tradition which induced them to place the appearances in Galilee must have been one of very great stability." Schmiedel's view of the origin of this tradition is given toward the close of his

article, where he discusses the first appearance of Jesus. Following Matthew-Mark he places Jesus' first appearance in Galilee and following Paul he describes it as an appearance to Peter. After discussing the nature of the appearances, the conclusion is reached that they were subjective visions. But what was the occasion of such a subjective vision on the part of Peter? In agreement with Weizsäcker, Schmiedel denies that it was the predictions by Jesus of his resurrection. Jesus' prophecies that He would return in glory are more important. But most important in Schmiedel's opinion was the fact that Peter had denied his Lord. "The form of Him whom Peter had denied must have come up before him with ever renewed vividness, however he may have struggled to escape it. Though at first he may have said to himself that this was a mere creation of his fancy, it is certainly not too bold a conjecture that a moment came when he believed he saw his Lord bodily present before him, whether it was that the eye was turned upon him with reproach and rebuke, or whether it was that it already assured him of that forgiveness for which, beyond all doubt, he had been praying with all the energy of his soul." (*Ency. Bib.* IV, c. 4085). What could happen to Peter might happen to others, and all the more so after it had happened to Peter. For "could he but once find himself able to say that he had seen Jesus, the others no longer needed to be able to raise themselves out of their state of prostration by their own strength; what had happened to Peter supplied what was wanting in this respect." Although Schmiedel does not specifically connect the origin of the Matthew-Mark tradition of the appearances with Peter, such a connection may fairly be inferred from the significance attributed to Peter's vision of Jesus. And yet if this be the origin of this form of Gospel tradition it is strange that of the two Gospels which supposedly contain it, Matthew alone narrates an appearance in Galilee, not, however, to Peter alone, but to the Eleven.

But it is held that the Matthew-Mark tradition, although

of great stability and of Petrine origin, is not self-consistent. Both Matthew and Mark imply that the disciples were present in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection,—a fact which is not only inconsistent with the occurrence of the first appearance in Galilee, but also one of the sources of the tradition preserved in Luke-John which locates the appearances in Jerusalem (*Ency. Bib.* II, c. 1879. IV, c. 4072). This inconsistency does not, however, discredit the Matthew-Mark tradition in regard to the place of the appearances; it simply shows that Matthew and Mark were mistaken in supposing that the disciples were still in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection. This appears from the fact recorded both by Matthew (26: 56) and by Mark (14: 50) that the disciples were dispersed after the arrest of Jesus,—a fact which is omitted by Luke. Peter, moreover, would hardly have exposed himself gratuitously to further danger after his denial. Only women were present at the crucifixion. Where were the disciples? Schmiedel confesses that this is not told, but suggests that "it is not difficult to conjecture that they had gone to their native Galilee,"—a fact insufficiently veiled in the angelic command that they should go there.

A little evidence is worth more than much conjecture. There is some evidence in Matthew-Mark that the disciples were in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection. A little evidence should be advanced to show that they were not there. Instead of evidence it is suggested that Matthew and Mark sought to remove the inconsistency in their narratives by recording the message of the angel to the women, whereas Luke-John secured consistency by dropping altogether the references to Galilee and transferring the appearances to Jerusalem. Such a treatment of the evidence, however, involves a highly artificial explanation of the message to the disciples and a very precarious use of the argument from silence.

Schmiedel's thesis, in a word, is this: The Gospel tradition concerning the place of the appearances of Jesus is

not only two-fold, but inconsistent. The earlier form represented in Matthew-Mark locates the appearances in Galilee, and this is the more trustworthy of the two. But an examination of the historical evidence yields the following facts. Mark mentions no place; Matthew mentions an appearance in Jerusalem and one in Galilee; it may fairly be inferred from Matthew and Mark that the disciples were in Jerusalem on the day of the resurrection; the Gospel of Peter mentions no place; Paul mentions no place.

The tradition which locates appearances of Jesus in Jerusalem is said to be secondary. What is the nature of the evidence which witnesses to this form of Gospel tradition? Matthew, one of the chief witnesses to the primary or Galilean form, narrates an appearance in Jerusalem (28: 9f.). Luke narrates an appearance of Jesus to Cleopas and a companion as they were journeying from Jerusalem to Emmaus on Easter Sunday (24: 13-32). On the return of these two to Jerusalem the disciples announce to them that Jesus had appeared to Simon (24: 33f.). Luke then narrates an appearance of Jesus to the disciples who were assembled in Jerusalem and closes with an account of Jesus' separation from the disciples, probably on the Mount of Olives, toward Bethany (24: 36-53, cf. Acts 1: 12). Thus Luke describes two appearances of Jesus, one near and one in Jerusalem. He mentions an appearance to Peter, but does not definitely locate it. The time of this appearance, however, makes it impossible to think of Galilee as the place of its occurrence. John narrates an appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre (20: 1-18) and two appearances to the disciples in Jerusalem, one on the evening of Easter Sunday, when Thomas was absent, and one a week later, when Thomas was present (20: 19-23, 24-29). The twenty-first chapter of John records an appearance to certain of the disciples in Galilee. The Gospel according to the Hebrews narrates an appearance to James, the Lord's brother (cf. 1 Cor. 15: 7). No place is mentioned, but the reference to

the servant of the high priest makes it natural to think of Jerusalem.⁷

What relation does the Luke-John tradition sustain to the Matthew-Mark tradition? Both traditions are well attested. They could be regarded as contradictory, and thus mutually exclusive, only on the theory that the Gospel narratives are complete, or that some one of them contains a complete record by which the others are to be judged. Such a theory, however, is not only opposed by 1 Cor. 15: 1-8; it would do great injustice to the Gospels, which manifestly are not and do not claim to be complete. Even where completeness may have been sought, as in the case of Luke (cf. 1: 3), its attainment must have been limited by the sources of information to which he had access. Contradiction might, however, arise out of the narratives themselves if the two traditions described the appearances in such a way as to be mutually exclusive. The Matthew-Mark tradition does not, either by its temporal or by its local elements, exclude appearances in Jerusalem. Does the Luke-John tradition exclude appearances in Galilee? It is urged that Luke not only locates the appearances in Jerusalem, but places them all on one day, the ascension occurring on Easter Sunday (cf. also Barn. 15: 9). This interpretation of Luke is inconsistent with Acts 1: 3, which mentions a period of forty days between the resurrection and the ascension. Inasmuch as Acts and the Third Gospel come from the same author,⁸ there is a presumption against this view of the last chapter of the Gospel. What are the facts? It is true that Luke does not mention the message of the angel or the message of Jesus bidding the disciples go to Galilee. His silence may have been due to the sources upon which he depended, but in any event it does not contradict the Matthew-Mark tradition. Moreover, a careful examina-

⁷ Jerome, *de viris illustribus*, 2. "Dominus autem cum dedisset syndonem servo sacerdotis, ivit ad Iacobum et apparuit ei."

⁸ Cf. Harnack, *Lukas der Arzt der Verfasser des dritten Evangeliums und der Apostelgeschichte*. 1906.

tion of the last chapter of the Gospel will reveal indications that the events there recorded did not occur on one day. The narrative begins with the visit of the women to the grave, and this is definitely placed on the first day of the week. The next event is the appearance of Jesus to Cleopas and his companion, and the time is again definitely stated as on the same day and as toward evening, the self-revelation of Jesus taking place at the evening meal (24: 13, 29). In that very hour the two disciples arose and returned to Jerusalem to the assembled disciples, who announced that Jesus had appeared to Simon, and they in turn narrated Jesus' appearance to them. While they were speaking Jesus stood in their midst, talked with them, ate in their presence and expounded to them the Scriptures. He finally led them out toward Bethany and was separated from them. Apparently there is no break in the temporal order. Every step is definitely linked to the preceding by some note of time (24: 13, 29, 33) or participial clause used temporally (24: 36) until 24: 44, 50. The particle of connection in both these verses is $\delta\epsilon$. In the one a saying of Jesus is introduced, in the other an action of Jesus. The saying may have been spoken in connection with the appearance narrated in 24: 36-43, or it may have been spoken at a later time. The latter interpretation is the more probable. The action introduced in 24: 50 can not well be connected temporally with this saying if the saying be temporally connected with the preceding appearance. This appearance was on the evening of Easter Sunday, and such a connection would necessitate the conclusion that the ascension occurred at night (but cf. Acts 1: 9f). Plummer remarks on Luke 24: 44-49:⁹ "The section seems to be a condensation of what was said by Christ to the Apostles between the Resurrection and the Ascension, partly on Easter Day and partly on other occasions. But we have no sure data by which to determine what was said that same evening, and what was spoken later. Thus Lange assigns only ver. 44 to

⁹ *International Critical Commentary*. St Luke. p. 561.

Easter Day, Godet at least vv. 44, 45, Euthymius vv. 44-49, while Meyer and others assign all the remaining verses also (44-53) to this same evening. On the other hand, Didon would give the whole of this section to a later occasion, after the manifestations in Galilee. It is evident that the command to remain ἐν τῇ πόλει (ver. 49) cannot have been given until after those manifestations, and was almost certainly given in Jerusalem." Again, speaking of the Ascension and the conclusion of the Gospel, Plummer says (*ibid.*, p. 564) :—"It is incredible that he can mean that, late at night (vv. 29, 33), Jesus led them out to Bethany, and ascended in the dark. So remarkable a feature would hardly have escaped mention. Probably δέ both here and in ver. 44 introduces a new occasion." If it be conceded that the last chapter of Luke does not require a time for the Ascension in conflict with all the other evidence, then the Luke-John tradition may be held together with the Matthew-Mark tradition, the four Gospels yielding a tradition which is indeed twofold but not inconsistent.

It is sometimes said that the witness of the New Testament to the resurrection cannot be used for historical purposes, whatever may be its value for religious purposes. Such a fact as the resurrection is thought to lie beyond the sphere of historical criticism, because the principles of historical criticism are held to be inapplicable where the miraculous is implicated. What underlies this view is, however, simply a philosophical naturalism in which no place can be found for the miraculous. As a matter of fact, historical criticism does and must subject the witness of the New Testament to the resurrection to a close and careful scrutiny. If the principles of historical criticism be naturalistic, no amount of the best historical evidence will suffice to accredit such an event as the resurrection; but if the principles of historical criticism admit the possibility of the miraculous, a possibility not denied by Schmiedel,¹⁰ then the work of

¹⁰ *Ency. Bib.* IV, c. 4040. "The present examination of the subject will not start from the proposition that miracles are impossible."

investigating the historicity of the resurrection does fall within the sphere of historical criticism and the question concerning the actual occurrence of this miracle resolves itself into a matter of evidence. It may indeed be confessed that the way in which a miracle is wrought may not be known, and that the power by which it is wrought is inscrutable, but concerning the occurrence of such an event the historical evidence must decide.

The evidence of the New Testament which accredits the historicity of the resurrection is early and clear. However much it may differ in detail, it witnesses to the fact both consistently and pervasively. It should receive at the hands of an historical criticism, which is not held in bondage by the limitations of naturalistic principles, the same recognition that is accorded to the New Testament witness to the belief of the disciples in the resurrection. Historical criticism can not, without ceasing to be historical, give up either of these facts. The differences which exist in the different narratives of the resurrection do not invalidate this judgment. For were they incapable of being so reconciled as to present an account complete and consistent in all its details, this should not affect the verdict that ought to be rendered concerning the fact upon which all the evidence is agreed. The differences, however, are not the essential element of the problem. There are differences in regard to the time, place, and attendant circumstances. One of these has been considered, the supposed inconsistency in the statements of the Gospels about the place of the appearances. Other questions arise, such as the order of the appearances, the persons to whom Jesus appeared, and the arrangement of the various events. But these difficulties, inherent in the nature of the sources and the consequent *lacunae* in our knowledge, do not render uncertain the evidence for the fact of the resurrection to which all the elements which make up the New Testament witness give consent.

But it may be said, according to the testimony of the New Testament itself, no one saw the resurrection. Its witness

to the resurrection therefore may be simply an inference drawn by the disciples from their experience of the appearances. The New Testament, it is true, does not describe the resurrection, and in this respect its narratives compare favorably with the account of that event given in the apocryphal Gospel of Peter. The New Testament, however, is consistent in representing Jesus as the subject of the resurrection, as the one who experienced it and therefore as the one best able on the basis of an adequate experience to testify to the fact. The value of the testimony of the disciples to the resurrection, however, is not lessened by its inferential character. For the validity of inferential testimony depends on the validity of its premises and the accuracy of the process by which the conclusion is reached. In other words, the value of inferential testimony lies in its nature as reasoning. In order to test it there is need simply to ascertain, what are the facts which constitute the premises, what is the conclusion, and then to inquire, is the conclusion warranted by the facts. What, then, are the facts which constitute the premises of the inferential judgment given in the witness of the disciples to the resurrection? The death and burial of Jesus, the empty grave observed on the morning of the third day after the crucifixion, the appearance of angels who announce the resurrection, and finally the various appearances of Jesus, who both by act and by word witnesses to his resurrection. The disciples disbelieved the report of the women about the grave and the appearance of the angels (Lk. 24: 11) and some doubted when Jesus appeared to them (Mt. 28: 17). In the case of Paul the premise of fact is not so extensive. It does include, however, the one essential fact in the appearance of Jesus to him, by means of which Paul was fully convinced of Jesus' resurrection,—a conclusion quite in accord with and subsequently confirmed more in detail by the tradition of the early church. When now the test of logic is applied to the conclusion from these premises as given in the inferential testimony of the disciples

and Paul to the resurrection it can not well be denied that the conclusion follows logically from the premises.

There can be very little question about the validity of the testimony of the New Testament to the resurrection, and consequently about the fact of the resurrection (since as a miraculous event its actual occurrence is simply a question of evidence), if the premises upon which this testimony rests once be granted. Hence the debate about the resurrection usually finds its natural center in the question regarding the validity of the premises upon which this testimony rests, and the center of this center is the question concerning the appearances of Jesus. For if reality once be admitted to the appearances as described in the New Testament, it will be difficult to escape the conclusion given in the New Testament witness to the fact of the resurrection.

Objection may be made to the New Testament testimony to the resurrection on the ground that this is the only testimony available, and, being limited to Christian sources, is the less valuable, by reason of the possibility that its only and sufficient origin may have been the purpose of the Christian consciousness to glorify Jesus. But the purpose to glorify Jesus is not an unworthy purpose. The New Testament writers attributes such a purpose to God, and among other things include in this purpose the resurrection (Rom. 6:4; Acts 3:13ff., cf. Phil. 2:9; Jn. 13:32). The purpose to glorify Jesus becomes an unworthy purpose only when in its interest something is said to have happened to Jesus, such as the resurrection, which did not happen. This is the point implied in the objection. No evidence is advanced to show that Jesus did not rise. If he did, the objection has no force. Moreover, it will be admitted that if the resurrection be a fact, the natural sources from which evidence could be expected would be Christian documents. It would be strange if such were not the case. When, therefore, Christian documents present such evidence, and this is found to be early, pervasive and consistent, it can not be dismissed as untrustworthy simply because it is Christian. It is not sufficient to

suggest that, being Christian, it may have had its origin in the Christian consciousness. To do so is, in plain language, to bring the charge of false witnessing against the Christian consciousness, and such a charge should be supported by some more substantial evidence than a mere possibility.

Let us consider for a moment the problem raised by the Christian character and origin of the evidence for the resurrection. The resurrection, like the miracles which Jesus wrought, was not a show-miracle. In the temptation Jesus set aside firmly the idea of a mere wonder-working Messiah (Mt. 4:3ff.; Lk. 4:3ff.). When the Scribes and Pharisees demanded a sign from heaven Jesus refused (Mk. 8:11). His miracles were ever kept in close relation with his work, usually requiring or calling forth a receptive attitude of faith on the part of those to whom He brought help. It is recorded that Jesus did not many mighty works in Nazareth because of their unbelief (Mt. 13:58; Mk. 6:5). In like manner the resurrection stands in closest relation to Jesus' work and to that receptive attitude of faith which his work was designed to produce. As an event which happened to Jesus it had its first and deepest meaning for Jesus Himself, for by it He passed out of the power of death, to which He had submitted Himself, into that new life which He now has with God. As the incarnation marks the historic beginning of the humiliation of the Son of God, so the resurrection marks the historic close of the humiliation and the historic beginning of Jesus' exaltation and glorification. This event was for Him resurrection from death and contains in itself all the meaning and potency of Jesus' death as Messiah; it was also resurrection into a life, in which all the rich blessings of Jesus' Messianic work, as this was brought to completion in the self-sacrifice of Calvary, are the possession of Jesus. But as the humiliation of Jesus was not for Himself, so the blessings of his death were not for Himself alone. The resurrection, therefore, by which He entered upon the full possession of these blessings, must have been of the greatest significance, not only for Jesus, but also

for those who with Him have an interest in his Messianic work. At that time these were above others those in whose hearts faith had quickened a loving devotion, the women who had been with Him in Galilee and had come up with Him to the last Passover and the men whom He had gathered about Himself and instructed. As during his earthly life Jesus labored to implant and develop faith, so after his resurrection He followed the same course. And as He knew before his death that unbelief would not be changed into faith though one rose from the dead (Lk. 16: 31; Jn. 11: 46ff.), so He neither came down from the cross at the taunt of his enemies (Mk. 15: 32) nor went to them after his resurrection to compel their faith. For the faith which Jesus came to bring, the faith which He desires, has moral qualities which cease to be so soon as faith becomes something compelled from without rather than something which springs from within. By this, however, it is not meant that the cause of faith is purely subjective, but that faith as distinguished from the object of faith is a voluntary disposition in which there is not only the element of recognition, the assent of the intellect, but also the element of appreciation, the consent of the whole nature. If either of these elements be neglected the resulting conception of faith will be partial and inadequate. An undue insistence on the intellectual element to the exclusion of the appreciative element, sometimes called the moral or practical, yields a purely theoretic and formal conception of faith. Quite as serious a change in the nature of faith follows an undue and exclusive insistence on the appreciative element in faith. If the moral and spiritual elements of faith be emphasized and faith be conceived as consisting essentially in the spiritual evaluation of phenomena, then this emotional and volitional appreciation of knowable truth, which between persons takes the form of trust, will leave little room for the intellectual apprehension of truth. Such a conception, however, cuts faith off from its object; for the phenomena, of which faith expresses personal appreciation in terms of value judgments, are ulti-

mately subjective experiences. If the theoretic or truth content of faith be affirmed only on grounds of moral and spiritual appreciation, faith can not speak with certainty about an object transcending the subjective sphere. But the faith which Jesus sought to inspire had an object, whether presented in the form of a message, an event, or a person, and this object, however mediated to consciousness in the sphere of knowledge, was not simply a phenomenon of consciousness or a purely subjective experience. Faith, therefore, while in its nature a subjective state, has a relational aspect which can be explained only in terms of its object. This gives to it a theoretic or knowledge content which transcends the subjective sphere. Faith and knowledge both have a theoretic content, but faith brings to its theoretic content a judgment of appreciation or value which in the sphere of personal relations takes the form of trust.

If Jesus sought to quicken faith in his message and in Himself before his death, it is but natural that his activity subsequent to his death and resurrection should have been directed toward the same end. The purpose, therefore, of the appearances to those who had faith in Him must be understood in the light both of Jesus' work of implanting a true faith and of the relation of the resurrection to such a faith. This faith, both before and after Jesus' death, had for its essential content Jesus the Messiah. Of this content, however, Jesus' own self-consciousness and perfect knowledge of his work were the standard, into conformity with which, in its measure, it was necessary that faith in Him should be brought. In other words, the work of informing faith was, equally with that of quickening faith, an essential part of Jesus' work. The Gospel records of the earthly ministry of Jesus reveal how much he did to give to faith an adequate content. This work He continued after his resurrection both by personal intercourse with his disciples and after his ascension through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Since the resurrection stood in closest relation to Jesus Himself and to the content of faith, which before his death

He had sought to perfect, it was but natural that the self-revelation of Jesus after his resurrection should have been made to those of faith. The Gospel records reveal plainly the fact that the appearances of Jesus had a very direct relation to faith. They were intended,—and hence their recurrence and the words of instruction which accompany them,—to inform the faith of the disciples in regard to Jesus Himself and his work. This informing of faith consisted primarily in the self-revelation of Jesus in such a manner as to convince the disciples not only of his resurrection, but also of his entrance into a life in which his Messianic power and authority were henceforth to be exercised, without restriction of time and space, in the interest of his Messianic kingdom. The Gospels narrate appearances of Jesus to the women and to his disciples. To those whom He had prepared to appreciate the significance of his Messianic work Jesus manifested Himself that their faith might more perfectly lay hold of Him in his triumphant Messianic life. Such a faith had, of course, moral qualities which could not be supplied by mere sensible apprehension, and hence Matthew tells of some who doubted when Jesus appeared to them (Mt. 28: 17). But while the early appearances were made chiefly to those who had believed on Him (cf. Acts 10: 39ff.), Jesus was not limited to the disciples in his self-revelation. When it pleased Him, He made revelation of Himself to his brother James (1 Cor. 15: 7) and later to one of the most bitter persecutors of his cause; and with the same purpose of quickening and informing faith He made of James a steadfast servant in the ministry of his Gospel to the Jewish nation, and of Paul a faithful and efficient witness among the Gentiles to his resurrection and saving power.

In the case of the appearance to James and to Paul, as in that of the appearances to those who had already believed on Him, the New Testament clearly describes the activity of a person, an activity voluntarily determined and directed toward a definite end. Viewed, therefore, in the light of

Jesus' activity before his death and in the light of the end of that activity in the quickening and informing of faith, the New Testament narratives of the activity of Jesus after his resurrection in manifesting Himself to the women, his disciples, James and Paul are self-consistent. It is only when these narratives are isolated from Jesus' whole life and work that objection can be made to them on the ground of the limitation of the appearances to the disciples, and its corollary, the Christian character and origin of the evidence for the resurrection. But when the appearances are conceived of as forming an organic part of Jesus' work and as contributing in their measure to a purpose consistently adhered to, the New Testament account of them is both perfectly natural and intrinsically reasonable. For if Jesus' work culminated in his death and resurrection and his work was directed toward stimulating and informing faith, then it was a matter of very great importance for the perfecting of faith in Himself as Messiah that Jesus should by his own self-revelation convince his disciples of his triumph over death and entrance upon another stage of his Messianic life. And this was the more important if Jesus intended to use the disciples in the building of his Messianic community or Church (Mt. 16: 18). This could be done only on the basis of a faith which consciously embraced Jesus as Messiah and realized in its essential elements the nature of his Messianic work. And if this work included the resurrection it was important for the faith of the disciples in Jesus' Messiahship and for the Church, which, through the disciples, Jesus founded, that Jesus should Himself inform their faith that they in turn might become true witnesses of Him and his work in the witness which they bore to his resurrection.

The Gospels locate the first appearances of Jesus in or near Jerusalem and assign them to the day of the resurrection. The appointment of Galilee by Jesus before his death as a place of meeting after his resurrection and the messages to his disciples to go there reveal a desire on Jesus' part to meet with them there. The appearances in Jerusalem, which

require the lapse of at least a week's time, make it impossible to suppose that the departure of the disciples to Galilee was a flight or that their state of mind on arrival was one of utter dejection. After the appearances in Galilee the disciples came again to Jerusalem, and were there at the time of Jesus' last appearance to them, which terminated with the ascension. The account given in the Gospels of the appearances of Jesus first in Jerusalem, then in Galilee, and finally in Jerusalem, furnishes a satisfactory explanation both of the belief of the disciples in the resurrection and of the origin of the Church in Jerusalem. This explanation, it is true, has explanatory value only on the theory, to which the New Testament is committed, that Jesus really rose from the dead on the third day after his crucifixion and entered upon a state of being in which his activity, though freed from the limitations of space and time, was in certain instances personally exercised in the sphere of space and time in the interest of the continuance of his Messianic work.

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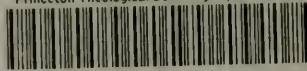
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